

# R2 –WEEKLY BULLETIN

Volume 1, Issue 12

April 10, 2009

## CREDENTIALING: IT'S EVERYBODY'S BUSINESS

If you work for FEMA – as a PFT, CORE, DAE or private contractor – and represent the agency in any disaster-related position, you need to know about credentialing, a new initiative of the Disaster Reserve Workforce Division (DRWD) that will ultimately ensure the consistent delivery of services to disaster victims by professionalizing the FEMA workforce.

The Agency-wide program will be rolled out via Cadre-Specific Credentialing Plans and the Disaster Workforce Task Books. This will provide a transparent process by which to document and assess the knowledge, skills and abilities (KSAs) of the FEMA workforce.

There are four Credentialing Types: Trainee; Type III-Basically Qualified; Type II-Fully Qualified and Type 1-Expert. Compensation will eventually be tied to typing.

Your level of typing will be determined by Training; Education; Exercises; Formal mentoring and Disaster experience.

The credentialing process will begin with DAEs as soon as each Cadre completes their Cadre-Specific Credentialing Plans. (In the interim begin collecting records of all the courses you have taken, either at a JFO or EMI, as well as records of your deployments and evaluations.) The process will then proceed through PFTs and COREs with field assignments.

By 2011, the credentialing project will be completed and implemented. As a result, FEMA will transform its Disaster Workforce into one that is credentialed to national standards, supported by a highly integrated, standardized and systematic program that will drive the Agency toward a culture of *demonstrable* professional excellence.

**NOTE: EA Cadre Members - please take the Skill Assessment survey below, and return by April 21.**

[https://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=PwIUdZjfiK2oOZekAKtkBg\\_3d\\_3d](https://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=PwIUdZjfiK2oOZekAKtkBg_3d_3d)

Contact your Cadre Manager with questions about credentialing and typing in your specific cadre.

## P.R. COOP COUP



Marie E. Gonzalez (center) with CAD Director Alex DeLaCampa (left), Acting Regional Administrator Michael Moriarty, and Rex Wamsley, Director of National Continuity Programs (right). Marie was honored for four years of service with the Continuity of Operations (COOP) program, which culminated in the first federally sponsored COOP exercise in Puerto Rico.

The Caribbean Area Division (CAD) held San Juan Resilience 2009, an earthquake-based Continuity Tabletop Exercise March 30- April 1, and it drew quite a crowd.

In addition to Rex Wamsley, National Continuity Division Director, Acting Regional Administrator Mike Moriarty and Region II National Continuity Program Manager Russell Fox, the two-day exercise brought together over 70 lead executives and Continuity of Operations (COOP) Plan Managers from more than 40 federal agencies in Puerto Rico. Participants topped 150.

The group was trained on National Continuity Priorities, Policies and Updates, and two tabletop players from each agency participated in an earthquake-based scenario with six major events.

The exercise gave the players the opportunity to test their agency's current COOP Plans in such areas as Essential Functions, Alert and Notification, Continuity Communications, Delegation of Authority, Orders of Succession, Vital Records, Continuity Facility Procedures and Security, Human Capital and Reconstitution.

'Hot Wash' discussions, facilitated by staff from HQs, Region II and the CAD, identified lessons learned, including the need to establish COOP facilities separate from the Primary Site, the need to explore alternative communications technology – like GETS cards and satellite phones – and procedures for increasing interagency coordination and the sharing of resources.

The exercise served as a catalyst for increased attention and commitment to continuity in Puerto Rico. To build on this success, monthly conference calls, additional training and interagency exercises are planned to build on this success.

## 'The Book' Thrown At Region; Priorities Defined

For the past two months, External Affairs has been working on a document designed to capture Region II in its entirety, and to provide each employee a complete picture of how we are structured, what each division does, and to provide an overview of Regional goals and priorities.

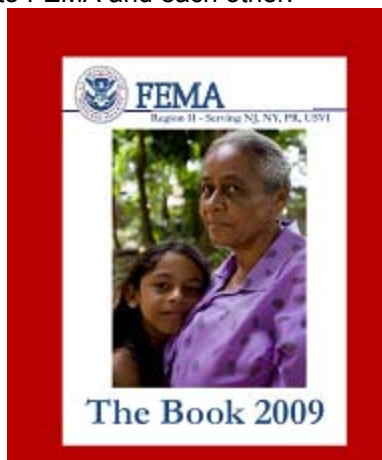
The first part of the project – simply known as *The Book, 2009* – contains the Region II 2009 Strategic Plan, a Regional profile examining the geographic and demographic characteristics of New York, New Jersey, Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands, including risk factors facing each area, a disaster history of each jurisdiction, preparedness efforts and an analysis of each area's needs and priorities. The Book also includes overviews of each Region II division with its mission information, staff, and priorities for the coming year.

The second part of the project is a volume called, *The Data, 2009* which provides detailed numerical data on a wide variety of regional parameters, including disaster declarations, IA and PA funding, NFIP insurance figures, HMPG summaries, and mitigation grants obligated and awarded. It also features dozens of maps, charts and spreadsheets.

Finally, this project also includes a directory on the common drive of Regional employees, with short biographies of each staffer. Ultimately this will include photos, to aid in the recognition of new faces in the halls and to advance congeniality.

The project grew out of recognition that Region II and, in the larger sense, FEMA itself, needed improved transparency, better integration of our various responsibilities, and more straightforward, direct communication, both internally and with the general public.

And, in addition to increasing our understanding of how the Region works, the project is expected to encourage more active participation in our common mission, more ideas, suggestions, critiques, and a livelier, ongoing dialogue about processes and purpose that should provide all of with a stronger sense of commitment to FEMA and each other.



## FACES OF THE REGION



Ben Sklaver, Preparedness Analysis and Planning Specialist, Preparedness Division

Ben Sklaver has been around.

Prior to joining Region II as a Preparedness Analysis and Planning Specialist for the National Preparedness Division, Ben served six years as a Program Analyst with the International Emergency and Refugee Health Branch of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in Atlanta. He participated in disaster response operations and training in Thailand, Zambia, Malawi, South Africa, Chad, Bosnia, Ethiopia, Vietnam and El Salvador, and was also responsible for oversight and synchronization of complex international relief efforts, managing more than \$5M in CDC grants annually, as well as contracts with private and public organizations involved in international disaster response.

Domestically, functioning under ESF-8, Ben led the CDC public health emergency response team in Dallas, TX following hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

Ben serves as a Captain in the U.S. Army Reserves, assigned to the 422<sup>nd</sup> Civil Affairs Battalion in Greensboro, NC. From 2006 – 2007 he was deployed to the Horn of Africa in the Global War on Terrorism. As a Civil Affairs team leader, Ben drilled wells, built schools and mentored Ugandan military forces to help secure areas of northern Uganda controlled by the Lords Resistance Army, a group with ties to Al Qaeda.

Next week, Ben's unit will be mobilized again for six weeks of training before going to Iraq for a year. "It's really the best job," Ben says, "I work with good people who are passionate about what they do: Bringing real, concrete change – schools, drinking water – to civilians."

When his deployment ends, Ben looks forward to returning to his duties with the Preparedness Division, and friends and family in Connecticut.



